

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

March 22, 2013

The Honorable Ray LaHood
Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, S.E.
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Secretary LaHood:

We are deeply disappointed by the Administration's choice today to push ahead with its proposed contract tower closings and are concerned about potential impacts on aviation safety.

On February 24, 2013, in an interview on *Meet the Press*, you promised the American people, "One thing we never compromise on is safety. We will never take a back seat to safety. Safety will not be compromised." Yet there are significant concerns regarding potential impacts to safety should you move forward with these closures, particularly at airports in busy areas of the aviation system with mixed-use operations and complex airport and airspace procedures.

It is imperative that you provide Congress with the information on which you relied to make these decisions. Therefore, we are formally requesting that the Department of Transportation and the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) provide the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate the following information:

- The safety analysis that ensures closing each tower, as well as so many towers at the same time, does not compromise aviation safety. Please provide all supporting data, documents, and analysis conducted; and
- A detailed justification and explanation for how the FAA determined each contract tower would be closed and what information was relied upon for each contract tower on the final closure list. Please provide all supporting data, documents, and analysis conducted.

We ask that you provide the requested documents and information immediately.

Safety must be the top priority of the Department and the FAA. As such, we continue to remind you that the FAA has the authority and the flexibility in its budget - not to mention transfer and reprogramming authorities - to find savings in other areas to avoid resorting to closing air traffic control towers. It is worth noting that, the specified towers in the FAA Contract Tower Program were all operational in 2009, when the FAA received less funding than it will under sequestration. Thoroughly examining all areas of potential savings and not potentially putting

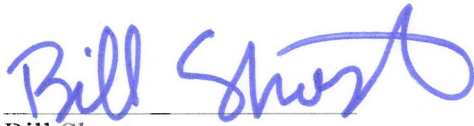
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safety at risk is the only way to productively move forward and ensure that the FAA upholds its stated commitment to the flying public.

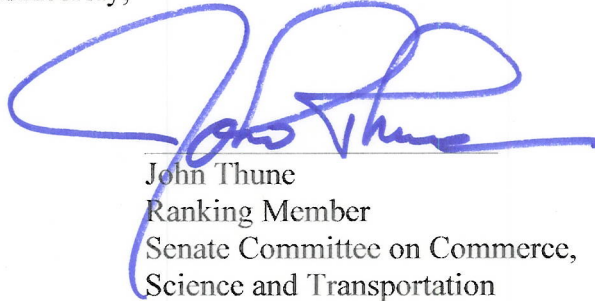
Sincerely,



Bill Shuster

Chairman

House Committee on Transportation
and Infrastructure



John Thune

Ranking Member

Senate Committee on Commerce,
Science and Transportation